Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Transparency

FAO-EU FLEGT PROGRAMME
Success story

Indonesia: Increasing the scope and reach of independent forest monitoring

Key facts

The FAO-EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Programme has supported a number of Indonesian civil society organizations (CSOs) to train and mentor 550 new independent forest monitors across Indonesia since 2017. Expanding the scope and reach of independent forest monitoring contributes to the robustness and credibility of the national timber legality assurance system and is critical in protecting Indonesia's forests.

Between 2010 and 2020, Indonesia's forest area declined by 753 000 ha every year.[1] While this constitutes a significant improvement compared to previous decades (1990-2010), where deforestation exceeded one million ha per year, efforts to reduce illegal deforestation and monitor forest use across the vast Indonesian archipelago are still an absolute necessity.

Independent forest monitoring (IFM) is a process by which civil society and communities living in and around the forest have the opportunity to monitor, document, and report suspected illegalities in the timber sector. IFM, together with government and third-party verification, plays an essential role in ensuring that timber entering Indonesia's supply chains complies with the legal requirements of the Indonesia timber legality verification system (System Verifikasi Legalitas Kayu, SVLK), the system at the heart of the EU-Indonesia voluntary partnership agreement (VPA). The Ministry of Environment and Forestry officially recognises the role of IFM organisations in SVLK implementation and acts upon IFM reports through an official feedback mechanism.

Since 2017, the Programme has supported six CSOs to extend the reach of IFM by equipping 550 independent monitors with the knowledge and tools to monitor resource use in and around the forest areas where they live. Trained independent forest monitors have applied their newly acquired understanding of legal requirements and investigative skills to report on activities of logging companies across Indonesia.

IFM activities have identified a range of violations along Indonesia's timber supply chain, including illegal processing of certain timber species, timber extraction outside of concession boundaries, failure to pay taxes on timber extraction, fraudulent practices in the issuance of timber product utilisation permits and non-compliance with occupational health and safety regulations. These violations have been reported and, in a number of cases, the information has been used to suspend SVLK certificates, fine or prosecute companies and individuals but also to improve the effectiveness of the SVLK in general.

[1] FAO. 2020. Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020: Main report. Rome. https://doi.org/10.4060/ca9825en

SHOUT
SHARE
IT

©FAO/Bokimururu & IFM Fund

Worked to
broaden the network of Independent monitors in Indonesia.

Worked for
local communities, Indigenous Peoples, women, and youth.

Worked with
the Independent Forest Monitoring Fund, the Independent Forest Monitoring Network, *Kaoem Telapak*, Jurnal Celebes, PPLH Mangkubumi, World Resource Institute Indonesia, and *Komunitas Konservasi Indonesia Warsi*

Worked thanks to
Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office of the United Kingdom (FCDO), European Union (EU), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

Related links
Independent Forest Monitoring Fund
Jaringan Pemantau Independen Kehutanan
PPLH Mangkubumi
WRI Indonesia
KKI Warsi
Kaoem Telapak
FAO-EU FLEGT Programme

Some rights reserved. This work is available under a CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO licence

Communities as partners to increase reach and report illegalities

One project supported by the Programme, which involved communities across eight Indonesian Provinces, capitalised on the unique knowledge of forest resources held by local and indigenous communities. Community members were instrumental in selecting critical areas and segments of the timber supply chain to be monitored, including a number of national parks, a UNESCO biosphere reserve and a wildlife sanctuary.

Across all the projects, trainings have targeted traditionally marginalised groups including 98 members of Indigenous communities and 120 women on the islands of Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan, Papua, and South Sulawesi. By using a mentorship programme to enhance the initial trainings, new monitors worked alongside experienced monitors to plan, undertake, and report on IFM.

By closely monitoring the effective implementation of the SLVK, IFM enables forest-dependent communities to understand their rights and actively participate in forest governance processes. In Bengkulu Province, support helped one such community advocate for protecting their forests, which were threatened by illegal encroachment by companies clearing land for oil palm plantations. Monitors joined forces with the media to disseminate their findings, bringing the issue to the attention of law enforcement agencies, ultimately leading to the arrest of the responsible illegal loggers.

Community members from another village on a remote island in North Maluku reported:

> ‘We are proud to undertake activities that have impact on a national scale and be part of something very big. We will use this knowledge and networking to monitor forests in our area and control the exploitation of natural resources around our village’

More important now than ever...

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought new challenges for Indonesia’s forests. Restrictions on movement have reduced the presence of law enforcement officials on the ground and in this context, support for IFM has become ever more pertinent.

Empowering local communities allows them to compensate for a reported reduced level of law enforcement activities caused by the pandemic and ensures that advances in sustainable forest management are safeguarded throughout times of crisis.

Based on previous achievements, the Programme is currently supporting four Indonesian partners (Independent Forest Monitoring Fund, The Environmental Advocacy Journalists Association, Center for Environmental Education Mangkubumi, and *Komunitas Konservai Indonesia Warsi*) working on IFM to build on previous advances, with a particular focus on strengthening the application and long-term implementation of the SVLK.

The FAO-EU FLEGT Programme works with a range of partners to help implement the European Union’s FLEGT Action Plan to combat illegal logging and associated trade. Since 2016, the FAO-EU FLEGT Programme has supported projects in 27 priority tropical timber producing countries throughout Africa, Latin America and Asia. In Indonesia, the Programme has funded 19 projects with a focus on VPA monitoring structures and efforts, institutional strengthening and capacity building, and transparency commitments.

Contact
FLEGT-Info@fao.org

FAO-EU FLEGT PROGRAMME

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations · Sweden Sverige · UKaid from the British people

© FAO, 2021
CB4532EN/1/05.21